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ABSTRACT

Given an expected increase in the number of female administrators, administrator-preparation courses must consider gender differences when developing career-development activities. This paper describes career-development assistance provided by a female educational administration professor to female students enrolled in a course on the Secondary Principalship at the University of Akron (Ohio). The professor offers reflections on her efforts to facilitate women students' development of a viable, personal view of the secondary principalship as a future career. The paper describes course content, delivery structure, and structural elements of the career-development planning process. Career-planning activities helped the women students find direction for their future careers; identify the ramifications of their career choice on personal-growth needs; clarify their self-identities; learn tools for solving personal problems; and adapt the plan to the future. One table is included. (Contains 121 references.) (LMI)

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Career Development Planning for Female Education Administration Students Enrolled in a Course on the Secondary School Principalship: Reflections of a Female Instructor

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Career Development Planning for Female Educational Administration Students Enrolled in a Course on the Secondary School Principalship: Reflections of a Female Instructor

Introduction

Based on a critical assessment of educational administration preparation programs, Stout (1989) concluded that there existed an "absence of agreement about what administration is, what administrators do and what they should do...(402). This issue is further compounded when one assumes that all individuals entering educational administration programs are alike , part of generic group. The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (1993) has directed attention to the need to build congruence between program content and practice within preparatory programs for the principalship. But Pohland and Carlson (1993) found that only incremental changes were occurring in educational administration programs at UCEA institutions. Recognizing that aspiring educational administrators are indeed a diverse group, preparatory programs should incorporate not only knowledge and skills suitable for a future role but also those necessary to achieve mutual acceptance and cooperation among peers. Learning about one's self, one's history, one's values and beliefs and the culture of dominate and minority groups could build bridges and open doors to future career opportunities. In educational administration courses, differentiation and recognition of gender differences and their affect upon behavior and future career choices is rare.

When Klein and Ortman (1994) reviewed the progress of gender equity in education, they found that "Males still predominate in higher prestige and higher paid positions at all educational levels of teaching and administration"

(p. 14). They suggested that females develop strategies which would reduce the overt and subtle barriers to advancement into an administration career. Shakeshaft (1989) recommended that the National Policy Board should "coordinate and support national and state planning that would support increased numbers of females in educational administration" (1). At issue is the need to recognize that females hold differing perspectives on careers than males (Gutek & Larwood, 1986; Marshall, 1989) .

Female students bring differing psychological history, social reality and sense of experience (Gilligan, 1982) which must be taken into consideration during preparation for a future career in educational administration. Assisting female educational administration students to develop a career perspective means instructors must give attention to the female view of a career as "cyclic interpretation of phases in notions of ebb and flow, of shedding and renewal" (Marshall, 1989, p. 285). When encouraging students to enter a career in educational administration, instructors should identify and differentiate both male and female career development needs.

Schein (1978) noted "The essence of the career development perspective is the focus on the interaction of the individual and the organization over time" (p. 2). For females, career development is "a life-long process, involving such aspects as one's development of self concept, interests, values, levels of decision making and choices...."(Diamond, 1986, p. 25). If increases in the number of female administrators is expected, career development activities used with groups of students preparing to become educational administrators must take into account gender differences which influence career choice. For female students enrolled in a course on the

Secondary Principalship at the University of Akron, career development assistance was made available through the efforts of a female instructor.

Since the traditional view of a career in educational administration is based on male values and supported by cultural expectations of educational settings, female students need to develop career strategies which will allow them to negotiate differential expectations for men and women regarding position appropriateness. In this case, the classroom became a setting within which female students realized that they would face "more constraints in the workplace..." (Gutek & Larwood, 1986, p. 10) and would have to learn to deal with stereotypes which ultimately might be detrimental to their career development. It was the intent of the instuctor to prepare female students for an indirect and sometimes illusive career path to the principalship, one that would not proceed as directly as that of their male peers.

These female students had entered a masters degree program directed toward preparing them for a predominately male career-the secondary principalship. Within the principalship course support for examining and understanding the impact of gender influences and differences upon a future career choice were made available. What follows is one female educational administration professor's reflection on her attempt to facilitate female students to develop a viable, personal view of the secondary principalship as a future career. Considerations about the appropriate process and content began with the instructor's reflection on her career in educational administration.

Reflections of the female instructor: Career Development

Listen to the mustn'ts, child
Listen to the don'ts
Listen to the shouldn'ts
The impossibles,. the won'ts
Listen to the never haves
Then listen close to me--
Anything can happen, child,
Anything can be.
(Silverstein, 1974, p. 27)

This was the message I heard as a child. If one was willing to persevere, my family believed that "anything can be" I assimilated the maxim and I worked to achieve. However, I did not fulfill the "anything" of my career until after I had traveled down several side streets, over some rough roads full of pot holes causing deflations in my self esteem. I stumbled over and around rocks placed in my path by not only myself but the world I lived in as a female. I fell, skinned my knees and bumped my head.

At times, I felt the world around me was askew, out of kilter. I would become confused. I searched for answers: Was it me? Or the place I'm in? The people I'm with? I wondered, pondered, grappled, rationalized, reflected and arrived at conclusions. I was trying to understand what was keeping me from achieving my "anything". I realized that I needed to prepare for the detour on the next rough road, to avoid the next rock that appeared on my way to arriving at who I wanted to be. As a female in an untraditional career, I struggled with who I was and who I could be within the reality of the world in which I had chosen to travel.

There were, in fact, two realities which I had to deal with during my career travels. One was owned by me. The second by the world within which I performed. Mine was based on a view of the world gained as a female who

enjoyed the untraditional--mathematics and science. I frequently jumped into situations because I knew I could achieve rather than accepting the message that I "was not supposed to do it." I knew that I could "make things happen." My successes--achieved frequently out of naiveté about the setting or situation--influenced my behaviors, my perceptions of people, the personal truths I held about the world around me. These ultimately personalized my sense of the ability to become, to achieve my "anything". Developed over time my view of the world grounded my reality, but it did not ultimately prepare me to travel a smooth career path.

I had to become introspective. I discovered that beliefs about myself and the values I held influenced my actions. Both influenced decisions I made about my career and the direction of my career path. One irrefutable reality emerged when I entered my first principalship. As a woman, it was risky to step ahead, alone on the road. In practice, it was scary to contemplate the reality of my career. I was not prepared to deal with the organization's expectations.

There was no smooth, clear, easy, direct path to this career for me. I stood alone, an example, lacking credibility and identity within the predominately male world I had entered. Because I was different, I soon learned that I had to take personal responsibility for finding a way through and around the organizational rocks. I was female. I had no map that would guide my travels nor did I always know clearly where or who I should be. Extraordinary efforts had to be expended in order to deal with the barriers I encountered. I quickly experienced the reality of the barriers faced by female educational administrators. They were greater for women than males (Ortiz & Marshall, 1995).

Shakeshaft (1991) stated that "being born female or male does not in itself affect how we will act as workers; however, the way we are treated from birth onward, because we are either female or male, does help to determine how we both see and navigate the world" (134). I experienced the truth of this. Early in my desire to achieve my "anything." I became aware of the fact that there were two routes to the principal's office--one for males and another for females. Males assumed the right to the principalship upon certification. They received assurance that a position would exist for them. This was not a realizable nor realistic assumption upon which I, as a female, could plan a career in educational administration. My principal's certificate nor my doctorate did not automatically guarantee a principalship. It did not automatically open the interview door.

If I was to achieve my "anything" as a female, I had to create a career reality which was built on awareness of the potholes and rocks which would appear in my path. I had to learn to devise skills and access knowledge which could be used to get around them. Building knowledge which supported my future career in educational administration meant that I must also develop strategies to deal with the potholes I would encounter as a female. I had to develop the ability to climb over, around, use a battering ram to break down or even to chisel a way inside to surmount the barriers. If I was to achieve my "anything", I knew that I had to learn to do this. I had to learn to take responsibility for my career.

My personal career experiences had demonstrated that "luck", visibility, "positioning", support networks, and significant male mentors played more critical roles in achieving principalship positions than had the use of a career development planning process. When attempting to make the next stop in my career, I experienced closed doors or I was the "token" female

in an interview pool. I had to learn to understand why I had not been chosen even though I knew that my qualifications and experiences were comparable and more extensive than the individual chosen. The reasons for my not being chosen were not always concretely presented.

As I sought answers, the necessary self-examination was painful. I identified my personal needs within the career I had chosen. I examined my skills, behavior and results I had achieved as well as the processes I had used to "get inside". I began to develop strategies which enabled me to better locate position openings and gain access into the interview process. I became more competent in my ability to critically examine the appropriateness of positions and their "fit" for me.

I found that the most reliable personal career strategies had to be based on understanding and knowledge gained through self-awareness. Throughout the process of discovery, it became clear that identification and affirmation of personal leadership behavior, beliefs and values that drove behavior were imperative for personal self-esteem. Building a network of other females desirous of achieving their "anything" within the field became important as did using professional experiences to build alliances with males already entrenched in the field.

I sought help and information from others already at the level of the positions in which I was interested, the majority of which were male. As a female, I quickly discovered that it was necessary to translate and transform information in order to develop a sense of congruence between my view of the world as a female and that of my male colleagues. The next step was to reorganize and translate the information into strategies which I could use to bridge what became obvious as gender differences. I had to learn to use my perceptions about reality to reduce organizational barriers which limited my

personal career advancement. Through this process, I gained access to important information about the world of the school and how it functioned as an organization.

Upon arriving yet again at another stage of achieving my "anything"--a professor of educational administration, I chose to use my personal experience and awareness gained as a female in the principalship to support the career development of female students. I began to incorporate career development planning processes within the context of the my course on the secondary principalship.

I was aware that my gender identification as a female could be used to influence behavior, perceptions and effectiveness to support understanding of female gender differentiation for both the males and females. Because I taught a course focused on the preparation of students for the secondary principal which included both males and females, I considered what I could do to encourage the females to follow an untraditional career path toward the secondary principalship. I wandered, what should be the process? What should be the content? How and why became critical questions that had to be answered.

I chose to facilitate and support these female students. It was the right thing for me to do. I sought to apply what I had learned in my travels and use it within a process that would support, encourage and prepare female students to achieve a future career as principal. As I developed and considered what would help these female students , I again walked through my own process of achieving my "anything.".

I would help my female students achieve their "anythings".

Decisions and Rationale: Building the Process

Educational settings have been perceived as unfavorably disposed toward women in leadership positions. Adkison(1981) concluded that women were less apt to actively seek these positions. Lack of confidence and low self esteem have been identified as personal barriers which deter women from considering school administration as a viable career choice (Schmuck, 1975). Since "women enter education to teach and be close to children, to be able to make a difference"(Shakeshaft, 1989, 205), these aspects as well as the fact that women defined career differently than men impacted decisions that women will make regarding future career choices (Bilkin, 1980).

Lynch (1990, p. 1-2) identified three distinct theories which can be used to explain why women are under-represented in educational leadership roles.

1. Women are inherently unsuited due to early socialization and therefore need to be re-socialized in order to perform more effectively.
2. Structural barriers within organization settings prevent female advancement.
3. Schools are reflections of male dominance in society at large.

However, research conducted within the National Association of Secondary Principal's Assessment Center found that females possess "both skills and career ambition necessary to be school administrators" (Ford & Millword, pp. 1-2).

Marshall (1994) indicated that "overt barriers exist and limit entry of women into the field. It is the barriers or boundaries that if un-recognized limit female advancement into administrative roles. Ortiz (1982) identified

three types of barriers or "boundaries" which inhibit female advancement into leadership roles have been identified:

1. Hierarchical differentiated by formal requirements such as degrees and certification;
2. Functional such as separation of levels of schools.
3. Inclusive or functional (Marshall & Kasten, 1994) or those which differentiate by organizational position and therefore decision making power.

(Ortiz, 1982, p. 17)

The informal relationships and covert assumptions held by those in decision making positions affect entry and deter the unprepared female. Without understanding the role which relationships and assumptions play in establishing criteria for organizational fit or as a basis for the establishment of the "boundaries", the door to potential career opportunity of the female students is closed. Since the secondary principalship is predominately assumed by males (In 1995, 12.8% were female in Ohio), the values and beliefs about performance in the role as well as organizational fit can be assumed to be based on a performance norm established by this population. If this is true, how should female students be helped to comprehend the effect of institutionalized expectations on future career aspirations and opportunities? How can awareness be built?

In 1975, Lortie had described teaching as "career-less" and holding less opportunity for individuals to "move up." Women particularly see themselves as teachers first and maintain this view throughout in a linear career path in education. They opt not to move ahead career-wise even though traditional roles for women are being challenged by social, political and economic forces (Herkelmann, et.al. 1993; Laid, 1988). Has their experience and

socialization within the school's organizational structure influenced personal views about ability and identity thereby limiting personal career choices as an educational administrator?

At the beginning of each secondary principalship course, it wass evident that the majority of the female students had adopted the reality of overt messages about their suitability for the role of principal. When asked if the secondary principalship would be a viable career move for them, frequent responses were "maybe" or "sometime in the future." Defending their choices in hesitant voices, female students indicated personal uncertainty about choosing the secondary principalship as a future career option. Upon further probing, the nebulous view held about the role a female could play as principal became evident. Because of their lack of experiences with female principals at the secondary level, the ability of females to perform in the role was being questioned. Female students were also questioning their own potential as principal.

Typically, the female students were not planning for a future career as high school principal. Instead, enrollment in the course would meet master's degree requirements which would, in turn, satisfied school districts' teacher tenure requirements. Increased salaries and assurance of a future in current teaching positions was the primary basis for pursuing a terminal degree. They were not motivated to enter the principalship nor did they view it as possible career choice or advancement.

It was refreshing to hear a female student unequivocally state that she has chosen the principalship as a future career. It was also rare. Although, Mertz and Neely (1990) had determined that some women consciously develop plans which focused on achievement of an administrative position; in general, females did not plan for a future career as principal. In

five years and five courses taught between 1990-1995 only two females acknowledged a career choice as principal. Even these females described the skepticism they encounter when their decision is presented to others. Cultural and gender issues imbedded within the nature of the organization of schools which sees ..."males as managers and females as workers...."(Shakeshaft, 1989, p. 51) were evident.

Emerging from the instructor's reflections on her own career as a secondary principal was a conscious effort to create a career development planning process which would encourage female students to "believe that they could" and "believe that they would". The instructor believed that a career development planning process should encourage reflection over past and future experiences. Through analysis of the meaning of these experiences, female students would be better able to determine their effect on a future career and to identify gender issues that would arise upon entry into a career as principal. A criteria for the instructor's decisions about the content and process of the career development planning process would be its ability to guide female students as they acted on their plan.

But the course enrollment included both male and female students. Singular attention to the needs of the female students could not be the sole criteria for including a career development planning process within the course. It had to be planned and instituted in such a manner that understanding of gender uniqueness, the implications of gender upon values, world view, leadership and the interpretation of behaviors within the secondary school setting could be considered by all students. Reflecting these concerns, three sets of questions guided the development of the career development planning process and the rationale for its incorporation into the course content:

1. What course content would encourage recognition, understanding and interpretation of the effect of gender differences on leadership behaviors, assumptions about people, learning and school organization? Secondarily, how should the information be presented? Lastly, how could it be used to build peer support?
2. What delivery structure would support all students but be particularly responsive to female developmental needs and career views? In what fashion would these influence female students consideration of entry into the secondary principalship?
3. What structural elements and processes should be included in order to assist which the female instructor in assuming the role of mentor to these female students as they engaged in personal decision making about a future career as a secondary school principalship?

Course Content Considerations. Many aspects of the literature were examined for their relationship to the course content. Career planning, career management and career strategies (Arthur, Hall & Lawrence, 1989; Brown, Brooks & Associates, 1984; Ciabotari, 1987; Farmanfarmaian, 1989; Krannich, 1989; McDaniels & Gysbers, 1992); career development for educational administrators (Gabler, 1987; Gorton & Schneider, 1991; Marshall, 1992; 1994), and career planning and development specifically focused on females (Gallos, 1989; Josselson, 1987; Gutek &Larwood, 1987; Marshall, 1989) were studied. A clearer understanding of female development and its differentiation from males was developed (Gallos, 1989; Gilligan, 1982, 1987; Josselson, 1987; Knowles, 1980; Sheely, 1982, 1995; Simmons & Weissmen, 1990; Tarvis, 1993).

Female leadership behavior was examined to determine differing value basis from that held by males (Berman, 1985; Canter & Bernay, 1992; Dopp & Sloan, 1986; Gross & Trask, 1976; Helgesen, 1990; Henning & Jardin, 1977; Josselson, 1987; Morrison, et. al., 1987; Sheehy, 1981). Distinguishing differences allowed the instructor to present and illustrate a leadership continuum ranging from "soft", or female, to "hard", or male. This information was then incorporated into the school reform and change literature (Barth, 1990; Evers & Lakomski, 1990; Schletley, 1990, Sergiovanni, 1991; 1995) to determine leadership skills and strategies important for future principals. Class activities were planned which provided students with opportunities to practice a range of leadership behaviors.

Organizational barriers including hiring practices which limit female career opportunities as well affect entry and advancement were identified(Aburdene & Naisbett, 1992; Adkison, 1981; Berman & Seabrook-Block, 1986; Bolman & Deal, 1991; Cater & Jones, 1989; Crompton & Sanderson, 1990; Crow, 1985; Dillard, 1995; Doft & Steers, 1986; Edson, 1988; Gross & Trask, 1976; Kagan, 1985; Kanter, 1977; Ortiz & Marshall, 1995). The female's traditional teaching role was examined from a historical perspective. Its basis was examined for gender bias and the effect of this upon the leadership role of females (Altenbaugh, (Ed.), 1992; Callahan, 1962; Douglas, 1988; Glanz, 1991; Kaufman, 1984; Warren (Ed.), 1989). Understanding the historical development of gender related job divisions in education would help students interpret gender differences and attitudes about the movement of women into positions of leadership with power (Tarvis, 1990).

Recommendations for improvements in educational administration programs (Blum, et. al., 1987; Burdin, 1989; Evers & Lakomski, 1991;

Griffiths, Stoute & Forsyth, 1988; Hallinger & Murphy, 1992; Herman & Heller, 1986; Jacobson & Conway, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1991; Shible, 1988) and schools (Barth, 1990; Evers & Lakomski, 1990; Schletley, 1990) helped outline recommended skills and strategies important to future educational administrators. Each was examined for its relevance to the secondary school principalship and ability to extend and support student examination of leadership behavior as a principal

Harrison (1987) had noted that "values are a kind of guidance system used by an individual faced with a choice among alternatives" (p. 181). Therefore, the influence of values on personal decision making (Lewis, 1990) and the effect personal beliefs and values play in the development of a personal view of self as a secondary principal were examined (Arygis & Schon, 1974; Schon, 1987; Sergiovanni, 1991, 1995). Since females frequently use "moral language" to describe their life experiences, recognition of the importance of this form of self-evaluative statements was necessary. Such statments would serve as a vehicle within which female students could base personal examination of relationships between "self-concept and cultural norms, what is valued and what other value, how we are told to act and how we feel about ourselves when we do or do not act that way" (Anderson & Jack, 1991, pp. 19-20). Coupled with the understanding of the relationship between personal behavior and organizational expectations (Arygis, 1990), the elements of extensions of course content emerged. Each was chosen for its usefulness to female students as they developed criteria for judging leadership behavior in the organization and creating a personal view of the principalship.

Delivery Structure. The design of the delivery structure of the career development planning process were chosen with a purpose. Of primary

importance was its need to support female students' development of a personal perspective on the secondary school principalship. Second, it had the potential for allowing them to develop a reality screen through which they could make career decisions. The elements of the structure were viewed as being supportive of female career development. The process would provide opportunities within which the instructor could affirm female students' efforts to prepare viable, flexible career plans within which they could examine, recognize and test a future career option (Gallos, 1989; Marshall, 1989). The process and structure would support female students' need to address particular areas of concern including age, marriage, pregnancy and child-rearing responsibilities and the effect of these on career choice, direction and timing (Gutek & Larwood, 1987).

The Career Development Planning Process: Structural Elements and Process.

The steps in the career development planning process include:

1. Preparation of a draft Educational Leadership Platform.
2. Review of the draft document by the instructor.
3. Individual meetings with the instructor to discuss draft Platform.
4. Small group meetings facilitated by the instructor within which Platform contents are shared and discussed.
5. Relevant course content focused on Platform content.
6. Class discussions using generic platform contents as basis for decision making regarding career choice, behaviors as principal, and identification of personal

and professional growth needs.

7. Development of career development plan.
8. Position search and interview seminars.
9. Large group reflection on career future and plans.

The career development planning process structure is not unusual. Its uniqueness, however, lies in the inclusion within a course on the secondary principalship within which female students are enrolled who are not intent on pursuing a career in the principalship. The fact that the instructor was female and had been a secondary school principal also contributed to the to the process. The process in its simplest form could be viewed as a ritualistic assignment; but in, actuality, it becomes complex as students realized the integration of the elements and the thinking processes involved to arrive at a plan.

Educational Leadership Platform. The use of the Educational Leadership Platform closely followed the recommendations of Barnett (1991); Barnett & Brill, (1989); Kottkamp (1990) Sergiovanni (1991, 1995; Sergiovanni and Starratt (1983). Within the Platform students were to reflect and present personal expectations in five areas: 1. Personal performance as a principal; 2. Professional staff behavior; 3. Learning behavior of students; 4. Learning environment of the school; and 5. Community, business and parent involvement in the school.

Students were instructed to respond as if they were "running for the office of the principal". The Platform was to become their campaign standard within which they would present values, beliefs and assumptions that they would be willing to speak to, defend and display as a pennant "on the flag pole outside a school". The reflection necessary to develop the platform was identified as an appropriate means within which female students could

develop and tell the story of "how they would negotiate their gender status " (Personal Narratives Group, 1989, p. 5) within a new career role. Through the reflection students were motivated to identify the how and why of their values, beliefs and assumptions that influence behavior. Attention was directed to reflecting on "Who I am" and then "Why these are important to me."

Within individual meetings with students, small group discussions and the classroom, the instructor supported students and redirected attention to answering the questions: "Who do I Want to be?" "How do I get there?" and "What do I want to do when I arrive?" As a result, students begin the process of career planning. The struggle to develop the platform opened discussions about future knowledge, skill and the practice needs of all the students and provided a setting within which female students were comfortable with voicing concerns about a future career as principal.

Female students would focus attention on identification of leadership behaviors not previously recognized. They grappled with their assumptions, values and beliefs and the inconsistencies experienced within the school structure. Shifts in thinking patterns and positions surfaced. Changes in personal views of the principal's role, authority and organizational behavior began to occur (Arygis, 1990; Arygis & Schon, 1974; Sergiovanni, 19921, 1995; Schon, 1987). As a result, feelings of inadequacy as well as questions of organizational fit were considered by the female students.

All students--male and female--become aware of the preponderance of male-oriented values supported within the schools. Female students come face to face with the effect these values--rational straight-line thinking, control, individualism, self-sufficiency and avoidance of vulnerability (Farmer, 1991)--have had on their definition of who they are and could be as

a female in the school. Past experience illustrated that beliefs do not necessarily "go along with" those of the individuals--predominately male--that make the decisions. Female students began to realize and understand that resulting frustrations and conflicts may have been influenced more by the organization's adoption of these values than recognition of their uniqueness. When questioning the rightness of the organization's values, they saw the reasons behind personal feelings of conflict and loss of self-esteem they had experienced.

Having adopted performance expectations and standards in order to fit within the cultural norms of the school, comprehension of the female roles they had assumed and the effect of the behaviors they had adopted emerged. Female students realized that they were being perceived as deficient and had subtly received messages that they would not be able to perform in the role of principal nor to even be considered for the position. First, the realization that they had adopted such expectations brings denial and then opens the window of opportunity for the instructor to assist them in answering the question, "What should I do to change the perceptions held by others about my potential?" At this point, career development strategies including image building can be presented and practiced.

It has become clear to the instructor that the platform preparation process can be used to build a the foundation which female students can use to developing a perspective on the secondary principalship as a future career. Female students spend time and invest a great deal of effort in this phase of the career development planning process. Their thoughtful effort is very obvious during the small group discussions of the draft platform. The drafts of the male students are sparse and indicate lack of in-depth thought. As the female students demonstrate their effort and interest, males begin to realize

the importance of the process and the role which the activity can play in developing personal perspective on the principalship. The breadth of the final documents contrasts sharply with those presented initially.

Career Development Plan. Understanding the deep seatedness of belief systems that divide what women appropriately do from what is right for men was a critical factor in deciding to assist female students in the career development planning process. Failure to recognize that traditional foundations of schooling could cause female students to accept limitations on a career future as a principal is problematic. Failure to be cognizant of the traditional foundations and research on gender related attitudes enables those with power to perpetuate the traditions that under gird their power and constrains those without power to accept their "otherness" and its debilitating consequences. As a result both male and females and the profession ultimately suffer as maximum use of available talent is not used to the advantage of the organization (Gallos, 1989; Laird, 1988).

Based on a view of self arrived at through the development of the educational leadership platform, students identify personal professional growth and career direction. Students are assured that the career direction should be an individual decision. To encourage female students, the instructor informs them that their plan does not necessarily have to be directed to an immediate career change. Female students are assured of having flexibility in preparing a view of a career future that considers the personal demands of their gender. Each student personalizes and adapts the career plan elements to fit their needs. Evidence of the student's self-understanding arrived at through the reflective platform development process can be seen in their career development plan.

The guidelines for the plan include the following

1. Vision of self as successful principal.
2. Personal performance goals.
3. Plan for achievement of goals.
4. Baseline expectations for goal attainment.
5. Identification of problems that would deter goal accomplishment.
6. Interventions which could prevent/limit problems in order to achieve goals.
7. Timelines
8. Personal proof of goal and/or plan accomplishment.
9. Accomplishment celebration and personal affirmation.

At the conclusion of the course, students discuss not only their plan but also the process of self-evaluation undertaken to develop it. Amid supportive peers--male and female, the discussions are lively. Listening, commenting and challenging each other. As a result, a male student disclosed that he had decided not to pursue a career as a secondary school principal. The students supported his decision and helped him shape a future. But when a female student indicated she had reached the same decision, her rationale for the decision was attacked by students, disclaiming her perceived inability to perform in the role of the principal. Supported by peers, she re-examined her decision and, importantly, her ability to be a principal. The support offered by her peers affirmed her personhood. With peers, shared "checking out" of myths of self, others and the future assisted students to make a transition to a new view of a future career as secondary school principal (McDaniels, 1992 p. 53).

Support Structure and Process: Mentorship. Two other aspects of the career development process call for consideration. Whitaker & Lane (1990)

have indicated the important played by female instructors in assisting female students to direct attention to their future. The female instructor's mentorship of the female students as they examine a future career as secondary principal (Noe, 1985; Woo, 1985) was a conscious effort. The instructor's experiences as a secondary principal, knowledge about the role, gender oriented view of schools and her own career experiences were used within the class. Specific information regarding the world of a female experience could be p.esented with credibility.

Within this context, delineation of gender differences in hiring practices, organizational belief systems about women in leadership positions, the uniqueness of and differences between male and female leadership behaviors, career views, work responsibilities and communication styles were presented. By thoughtfully presenting such information , it was the hope of the instructor that students would perceive a continuum of leadership behavior across and influence hiring and promotion practices that affect careers of the female students (Marshall & Mitchell, 1989) could be influenced. Opportunities for all students to examine, experience and learn to appreciate the gender uniqueness of their peers were provided within the class.

Support Structure: Field Experience. A second female emerged as mentor. Since students were participating in a field experience at the same time they were enrolled in the course, the field supervisor--a female, former high school principal--provided additional support for the career development planning process. Position search and interview preparation (Alley, 1994) became the focus of the field experience seminars. As a result, students gained access to guidelines for locating future positions, application processes, interview questions, interview rehearsals and the preparation of

portfolios within which the platform and career plan were included. To support female students' reflection about a future career as principal and personal identity in the role, the field supervisor encouraged students to extend student reflection on experiences. Further definitions of leadership behaviors they would adopt emerged. The documentation of these reflections within the field experience journal created another source of valuable information for the instructor. This information flowed back into the course content and into the student's continual revision of the platform and plan.

The Career Development Planning Process: Reflections of Female Students.

For female students, the career development planning process based on self-examination of assumptions, beliefs and values, caused them to search for congruency between their standards, behaviors and the organizational structure of their schools. Discovered relationships assisted them in perceiving future career choices more clearly. Female career issues and gender uniqueness were recognized. With support of a female who has lived through and in the world of their future career, the personally perceived limiting dimensions on career direction were examined. As a result, career options, strategies and choices become evident. Possibilities for a future career emerged. It appeared that when female students created a "picture of self", they, therefore, could more easily direct attention to building readiness to actively pursue a career direction as principal.

Based on content analysis of the female students' reflection on participation in the career planning process, there seems to be

five areas of personal effect: 1. Provision of direction for personal career future; 2. Identification of affect of future career choice on personal growth; 3. Clarification of self identity; 4. Recognition of process value as personal problem solving activity and 5. Recognition of viability of plans use in the future.(Table 1).

Table 1

Effect of career planning process on students

Personal Affect	Female student response
Direction for personal career future	Realized lack of immediate readiness for future career move. Increased ability to recognize position options Increased ability to recognize readiness for position acceptance Placed future career within identified personal purpose Realized movement toward future career was taking place Realized need to be selective in position search Realized need to be selective in position acceptance Expanded view of future position search possibilities Realized need to prepare for change Forced commitment to self in a future
Identification of affect of future career choice on personal growth needs	Realized lack of readiness for change to new position Understand role of personal high expectations may have on others Realized need for continuing skill development and personal growth Realized critical role which communication skills will have in dealing with people
Clarification of self identity	"Who I am" "What I am" "Why I say and do what I am" Place of values, beliefs and attitudes will play in future role and behavior Identification of issues which I am willing to "stand up for myself"

Personal problem solving activity	Tool and means to separate the future into smaller pieces . Identification of future personal grown needs
Viability of plan's use in the future	Information base usable for evaluation of progress and reassessment of direction Recognition that "my plan for the future is not complete"

The instructor's intent for including a career development planning process within a course focused on the secondary principalship was to assist female students. It was hoped that students would reflect, analyze and build personal meaning for a future career as principal. In Lynn's reflections over the experience recorded at the end of the course, she said

> This entire career plan development process has made me think about aspects of my future and career that I had never thought about before. I found the process to be scary--not about the work ahead of me, but of the vision of myself actually being an assistant principal or principal. Since putting it down on paper, I can see where I have to go and am ready to start making my move. I cannot continue at status quo until a job opens up. Preparation begins now.

Retrospectively, she realized that prior to participation in the career development process she had never given serious consideration to planning a career. She would just let it happen. As a result of her plan, Lynn has developed strategies to achieve her future career goal as principal. Realizing the need to become more visible, she has willingly asked for and assumed responsibilities from both the principal and assistant principals in her school. She takes "herself" very seriously particularly when examining her "fit" into the next responsibility she assumes.

Today, she reports that she is "plugging away", taking "one step at a time." She views the achievement of her future career as principal "very seriously". To advance her career , she has moved into a district leadership

position as director of vocational education and enrolled in a doctoral program in educational administration.

Becoming more astute at recognizing barriers to her career advancement, she has recognized that she will have to look beyond her school district for her first principalship. Having had a female instructor, led her to believe that there was no reason why she "could not do it."

Lynn is only one of the female students who participated in the career development planning process. There are others. Their perspectives will be investigated further. The documentation of the effect of the career development planning process is not complete.

Concluding Reflections of the Female Instructor

Traveling through what was the chaos of the preparation of this paper opened the floodgate of questions. My colleague who patiently suffered through the discussions that followed and then questioned "Why?" redirected attention to my internal search for answers. This search deepened and widened during interview and discussions with female students. Issues and concerns surfaced. Thus, the nature of the contents of this paper twisted and turned until a beginning emerged. I needed to reflect on my own process, decisions and experiences at arriving at the decision to support female students. A second stage followed the first as I attempted to reflect on the implementation of the career development practice---walking, step-by-step through the process, critically surveying and assessing its effect in the classroom. A third followed as student interviews were undertaken resulting

in changes in the research direction as the complexity of the topic became clear.

Reflections on assumptions and practice were critical for personal understanding about the instructor's decision to provide a form of career development planning within the course on the principalship. The moral rightness of the effort to assist female students in developing a view of the secondary principalship rested in my ability to answer the question, "Why is it I do what I do?" This paper is my attempt to "check out", to more clearly fuse assumptions, content and practice. These reflections serve and have served as a vehicle through which I could recognize and understand "contingent situated claims and to acknowledge (my) own history and self in the process" (Weiler, 1991, p. 470) in order to better assist female students validate differences. Paraphrasing Laid (1988) my taking the female students future career as principal seriously meant taking there gender seriously and asking, "For a female, what does and should a career as principal mean?" (462)

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